

[22 February, 2001] RAJYA SABHA

levy sugar under the PDS has been increased from 425 gms. to 500 gms., which would benefit the people below poverty line.

**Treating Swarna Masuri variety of paddy as 'A' grade in
Andhra Pradesh**

157. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not treated the "Swarna Masuri" variety of paddy as 'A' grade variety in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether inspite of instructions from the higher authorities in this regard the local purchasing staff was not following the instructions;

(c) whether this has resulted in difficulties to the paddy growers in the State; and

(d) whether any fresh instructions would be issued to the concerned officials to be careful in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) As per the existing system of classification of paddy/rice varieties based on Length/Breadth (L/B) ratio, Swarna Masuri (MTU-7029) variety of paddy grown in Andhra Pradesh was not found conforming to the L/B ratio applicable to Grade 'A' during the current Kharif Marketing Season 2000-2001. However, considering the request of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Government has allowed procurement of Swarna Masuri variety of paddy at the price applicable to grade 'A' i.e. Rs. 540/-per quintal. The Government has also allowed procurement of all varieties of Grade 'A' rice, including Swarna Masuri both raw and parboiled with admixture of lower class upto a maximum limit of 13% as against the limit of 10% provided under the uniform (FAQ) specification in Andhra Pradesh operative upto 31.3.2001.